agencies are adhering to the payment plan. Those who do not, are not allowed the normal credit period of sixty days. In case the dues are not cleared, the normal credit period is suspended and agencies are allowed their programmes only on advance payment of telecast fee.

(iv) Defaulting agencies are allowed to run their programmes only on advance payment of telecast fee.

(v) To secure the DD's revenues and to cover the credit period, the Bank Guarantee amounts for running serials, running on normal telecast fee is increased to four times the telecast fee. In the case of high value MG programmes this is the minimum guarantee amount for two episodes.

Proposal for New Regional Channels

†5261. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased state:

(a) the number of new regional channels proposed to be started by Government in the year 1999-2000;

(b) the names of the States where these regional channels are planned to be started;

(c) the amount likely to be spent for this purpose; and

(d) the population of the country to be benefited through the said channels?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) No new regional channel was started by Government in the year 1999-2000. However since January 2000, the telecast duration of Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu regional language satellite channels have been increased to 24 hours and the telecast duration of Kashir Channel was increased to 15 hours. There is also a proposal to increase the telecast duration of Punjabi satellite channel to 24 hours during the current financial year.

All the Satellite Channels are available through out the country. The Kashir Channel is at present available to viewers within a radius of 20

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Kilometres in and around Srinagar. The existing Low Power Transmitter for the Kashmir Channel is being upgraded to a High Power Transmitter shortly, which will enable people within a radius of 40 Kilometres from Srinagar transmitter to view the Chennel.

Repetition of Historical Serials

5262. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1130 given in Rajya Sabha on 6th March, 2000 and state:

(a) whether historical serials mentioned in the reply are being repeated with different titles:

(b) whether some producers have objected to the telecast of these serials with same theme *viz.* Akbar the Great; and

(c) if so, what are the complete details thereof and what steps are being taken to stop repeating serials having same storyline/theme and not potentially viable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Shri Akbar Khan, the producer of the serial "Akbar the Great" has filed a suit for stay of the ongoing serial 'Noorjahan' presented by M/s Cinevista Communications. The serial "Akbar the Great" has already been telecast for 49 episodes out of the total sanctioned 52 episodes. Thereafter the producer could not continue the telecast of the serial. The concept of both the serials are quite different. In fact, the serial "Noorjahan" is a love story of Salim and Mehrunnisha presented in the form of a fiction based on the novel "Noorjahan" written by Jyoti Jaffa, while the serial "Akbar the Great" is purely a historical serial on the life of great Mughal Emperor Akbar. The suit is still pending in the Court of Civil Judge, Tis Hazari and the Hon'ble Court has also not stayed the telecast of the serial "Noorjahan" which has been telecast for 34 episodes out of the total sanctioned 104 episodes. There is no move to stop "Noorjahan", a potentially viable serial which has high production values and is giving